

# Land Use—Creating and Protecting Neighborhoods and Centers

*Old and new development patterns and redevelopment opportunities are key components of the City's aesthetic, economic and social framework. Maintaining a high quality of life within an urban context will distinguish the City from the surrounding suburban communities.*

## Community Character

The City of Fairfax is a unique place at the heart of Northern Virginia. The elements of character, scale and other physical features at the roots of the City landscape provide residents with their “sense of place.” The Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan presents an inventory of the City's points of entry, land use patterns and basic physical design and organization. It also presents a description of the regional patterns that are necessary to understand the City's context within the region. The goals and objectives of the Land Use section and the direction provided in the Land Use Plan reflect the will and the ability of the City to absorb growth and change while retaining its distinctive quality.

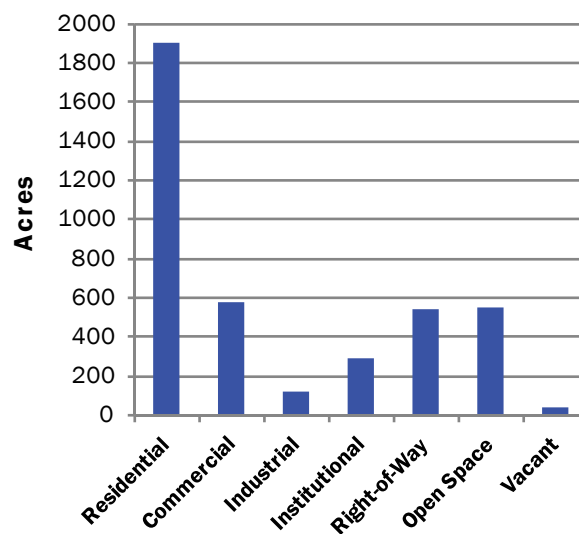
## Existing Land Use

The City's current pattern of land use is the result of its history and location. The City initially developed as a small settlement at the intersection of two major roads that would become the present-day Routes 123 and 236. When the county courthouse was moved to that crossroads in 1800, supporting uses began to locate nearby. The City later became intertwined with the Washington metropolitan region's economy and eventually developed plans and ordinances to guide future development. In recent years, changing demographics, intense development in the Fairfax Center area west of the City, technological advancements, the growth in federal government employment and contracting, strong regional population growth and new market preferences have all influenced the pattern of development in the City. As a result of these shifts, residential and commercial sites that were previously developed have been redeveloped into more modern uses, often resulting in a more intense design replacing the previous layout.

The total land area within City boundaries is approximately 6.3 square miles. The City's land area surrounds an approximately 50-acre tract of land near the City's center known as the Massey Complex. Excluding this land, which is part of Fairfax County, existing land use in the City (see Map LU-1) is distributed among the seven major categories of land use described in the paragraphs below (see Figure LU-1).

For all land use categories involving the possibility of development, the most notable feature is a scarcity of land that is not already developed that is not significantly constrained by restrictions, environmental issues or other constraints. Accordingly, due to this lack of developable vacant land, the City can accurately be described as being “built out.” Although some small parcels can in fact be built upon, the portion of the City's land area that can be

**Figure LU-1**  
**2011 Land Use Summary**



Source: City of Fairfax CDP, 2011

built upon is a tiny fraction of its overall size. Accordingly, most new development that takes place in future years will involve the redevelopment of previously developed lands. For those areas where undeveloped lands are available, great sensitivity to the already-developed surroundings of these lands will need to be practiced to ensure that the City's existing fabric is not disturbed.

Given the development pressures and existing physical conditions described in the preceding paragraphs, the following strategies are essential toward the successful implementation of the land use component of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Provide clear descriptions of desired land uses in the Land Use Plan and designate areas accordingly on the Future Land Use map
- Consistently articulate the vision in the Comprehensive Plan as a part of the deliberation process for land use cases
- Amend the City's development regulations and policies (zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, public facilities manual, etc.) as needed to support the vision

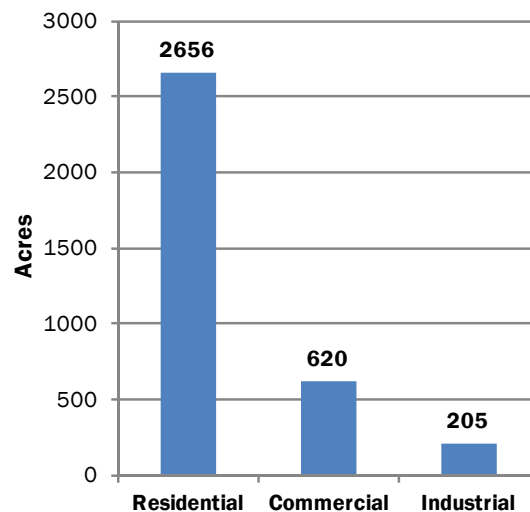
## Residential

Residential land uses composed approximately 47 percent of total land areas in the City in 2011 – including all land in detached housing, townhouses and condominiums, as well as residential vacant land and parcels owned by homeowners associations. Boundary adjustments in 1991, 1994 and 2001 added 84 acres of residential land to the City. Parcels containing single-family detached homes composed approximately 82 percent of the residentially developed land.

In 2011, there were more than 2,600 acres of residentially zoned land in the City (including land zoned for detached houses, townhouses, multifamily units, and planned developments), of which 20 acres were vacant. (See Figure LU-2). Most of the vacant residential land (approximately 84 percent) was zoned for single-family housing. With the exception of a number of contiguous properties along School Street currently slated for development, the vacant land in residential areas generally consists of scattered individual properties.

Although single-family neighborhoods have a long-standing status as the predominant use of land in the City, only recently has there been a trend towards new construction of single-family “move-up” housing, predominantly on infill sites in the City. Between 2004 and mid-2010, 266 new

Figure LU-2  
**Zoning Summary**



Source: City of Fairfax CDP, 2011

housing units have been completed or approved. Fifty-five percent of the new housing units were detached homes (the other 45% were townhouses). The detached homes, which serve to broaden the City's housing stock with generally larger floor plans and modern amenities, were developed on infill lots (64 units) and in new subdivisions (82 units). This production of new upscale units will hopefully solve the recent problem of families who wanted to move to larger, more expensive single-family homes having to relocate to communities outside the City to meet their needs.

Residential townhouses in the City are typically brick “colonial” style structures ranging in height from two to four stories. Most townhouse developments in the City contain fewer than 100 units, although the Comstock townhouse development has nearly 250 units.

There are 13 residential apartment complexes containing 1,403 units, and eight residential condominium developments in the City, containing 1,114 units. Most of the multifamily complexes are two to three stories in height, with the exception of The Crossings, The Mosby, and Providence Square condominiums, each of which contain four stories of living spaces. Several of the apartment and condominium developments feature townhouse-style units as well.

## Commercial

Commercially-zoned land constituted 18 percent of all land in the City in 2011, with 620 acres designated in one of the City's commercial zoning districts. As of 2011, there was approximately 18 acres of vacant land in the City's

commercial districts. These vacant lands have already been approved for development or have significant topographic or other site constraints which will limit their development potential.

Examples of general commercial uses in the City include freestanding retail and service-oriented establishments, and those contained in office buildings and shopping centers. Virtually all of the City's general commercial development is located along the Fairfax Boulevard and Main Street Corridors. The Fairfax Boulevard Corridor, in particular, exhibits many of the characteristics of strip commercial development dating from the 1950s through the 1970s. Most structures have been built along this corridor relatively independent of their surroundings, with little regard for safe and efficient vehicular access, little or no landscaping and no real consideration for pedestrians. Future redevelopment along the Fairfax Boulevard Corridor should be designed in a manner to coordinate with nearby business centers, giving the area a coherent visual theme and more organized pedestrian and traffic flows. The Land Use Plan identifies the Fairfax Boulevard Corridor as the principal sector for future commercial development and redevelopment in the City. Further, the City's Community Appearance Plan addresses some of the aesthetic aspects of the corridor, and the Transportation Plan contains additional recommendations for improved vehicular access and safety. The Economy Section takes a long-term approach to the ultimate development and composition of the corridor as a regional commercial center.

Office development has generally duplicated the overall pattern of commercial development, but concentrations of office development can also be found along University Drive, Judicial Drive, Eaton Place, Chain Bridge Road, Pickett Road and throughout and adjacent to the Old Town core.

## ***Industrial***

There were 205 acres zoned for industrial use in the City in 2011. Of those acres, only the tank farm on Pickett Road and the asphalt plant on Old Pickett Road are considered to be heavy industrial. The remaining industrially developed land generally consists of automotive repair establishments, property yards, and light warehousing. Future growth of light industrial land uses may be constrained by the limited supply of developable vacant, industrially zoned land. Virtually no industrially zoned vacant land remains in the City; therefore, growth in this sector of the local economy would need to occur with the redevelopment of commercial properties in industrial zoning districts.

## ***Institutional***

Institutional land uses consist of publicly owned property as well as quasi-public uses such as churches and nonprofit organizations. Institutional land uses consumed approximately 291 acres or 7.3 percent of the total land area in the City in 2011. Uses owned and operated by the City of Fairfax as well as other public entities, including Fairfax County, the U.S. Postal Service, and George Mason University compose the majority (69%) of the institutional land area. Ninety-one acres is utilized by a combination of churches, social and community organizations, and nursing/hospital facilities, with the largest individual landowner being the Catholic Diocese of Arlington.

## ***Right-of-Way***

The public right-of-way within the City consists primarily of land used for public streets, trails and sidewalks. In 2011, public right-of-way comprised more than 539 acres or approximately 13 percent of the total land area in the City.

## ***Vacant Land***

There were 38 acres of vacant land in the City in 2011, representing less than one percent of the City's total land area. This included approximately 20 acres of residentially zoned land and 18 acres of commercially zoned land. The rate of new development in the City will continue to decrease in the next decades as the supply of vacant land decreases. Conversely, redevelopment of existing commercial and light industrial properties with more land-intensive development should increase in the next decades.

## ***Open Space***

Open space, both publicly and privately held, composes over 13 percent of the total land area in the City (approximately 548 acres). Recent acquisitions by the City of Fairfax (described in greater detail in the Open Space chapter of the plan) have significantly expanded the public inventory of open space (now totaling 246 acres exclusive of the open spaces on school properties). The Army Navy Country Club is the largest single non-public landowner of open space, covering 235 acres with its golf course and related facilities. Other non-public open space is included in homeowners' associations' common grounds and community pool properties. Zoning for lands considered as open space is varied.



Future open space land totals will be dependent on a number of factors, including City purchases of land to create officially designated open space, dedication of lands as open space as parts of development approvals and designation of lands as undevelopable through land use or environmental regulations.

## Old Town Fairfax

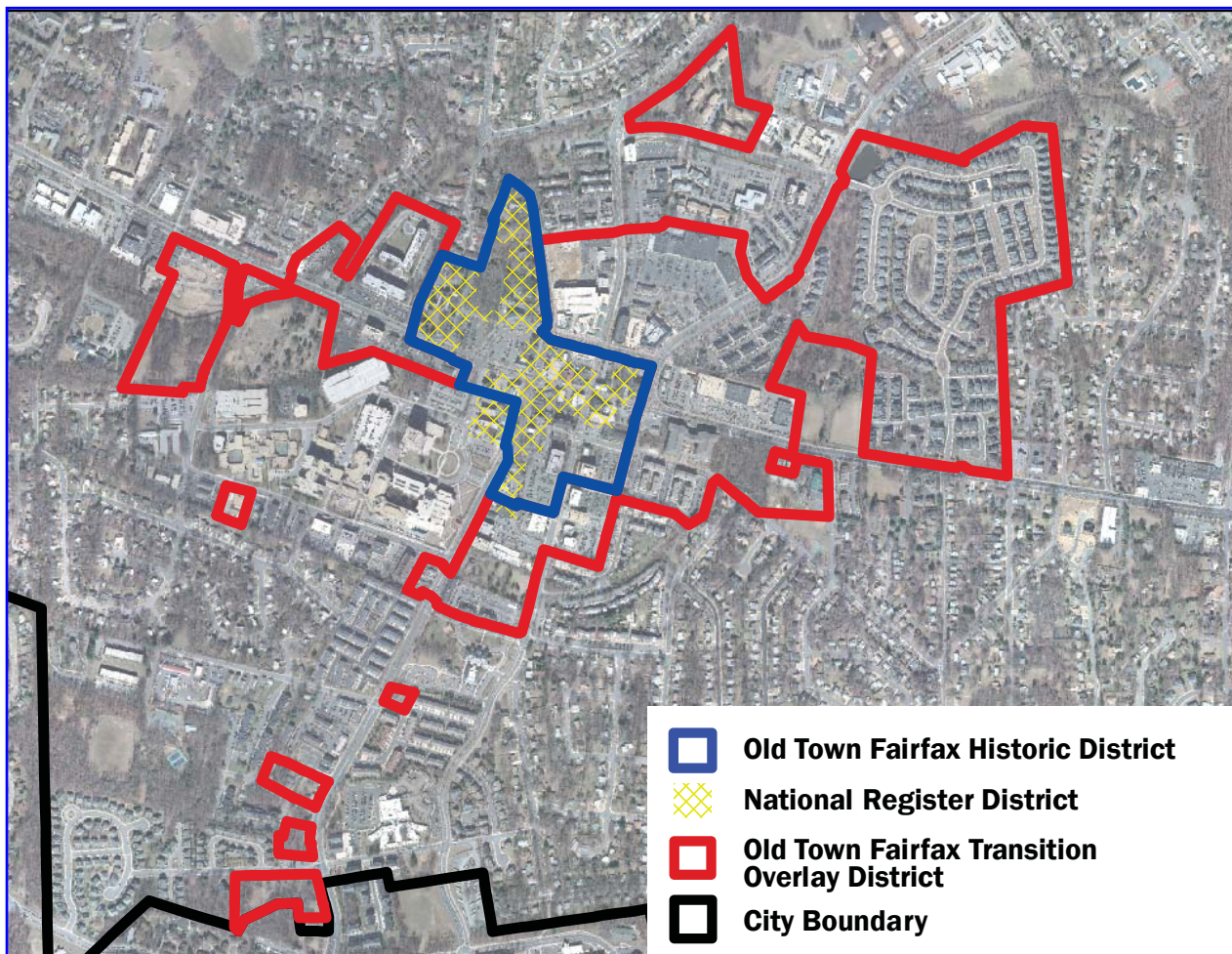
Because of its historical significance and distinctive character, the City's Old Town area is examined in closer detail. Within the City, Old Town is unique because of the presence of well-preserved nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, and its pedestrian qualities with short blocks, brick sidewalks, and gas lighting.

Old Town Fairfax contains two distinctive areas—the Historic District and the Transition Overlay District. A National Register Historic District is also contained within

Old Town Fairfax, covering an area similar to the locally-designated Historic District (see Map LU-2). Land use in these historic districts is described below in more detail.

Because the area immediately surrounding the Historic District is closely linked by the similarity of the existing development and use characteristics, it has been designated as the Transition Overlay District to emphasize its function as a transition to the Historic District. This designation affords greater control over development in that area and can be used to encourage increased pedestrian patronage of downtown businesses. The boundaries of the Transition Overlay District are shown in (Map LU-2). Combined with the Historic District, these areas are collectively known as Old Town Fairfax. Despite its historic attributes, the viability of Old Town Fairfax is threatened by the forces of intense traffic, development pressures, competition from regional malls and local shopping centers and the lack of abundant, accessible parking.

Map LU-2  
**Old Town Fairfax**



Source: City of Fairfax CDP, 2011; Amended May 2013

## ***The Historic Districts***

The distinction between the locally-designated Historic District and the state and federally-recognized National Register District is noteworthy. The National Register designation is an honorary recognition of the architectural and historical significance of the buildings and structures located in the district. It imposes no architectural controls or property restrictions unless public funds are involved for rehabilitation. However, qualifying property owners are eligible for federal and state tax credits for the proper rehabilitation of contributing properties in National Register districts.

The Old Town Fairfax Historic District, by contrast, is an overlay zoning district that imposes special bulk, area and use restrictions and design controls on structures and sites. Within that district, all proposed alterations, additions, demolitions and new construction must be reviewed and approved by the City's Board of Architectural Review.

## ***Old Town Fairfax Land Use***

The City's Old Town has long been a preferred location for offices, especially for businesses that frequently interact with the City and County governments. Offices for lawyers, banks, insurance and other businesses dominate the Old Town area.

The most significant recent development project in Old Town has been Old Town Village, containing 53,000 square feet of retail space, 91,000 square feet of office condominium space and a 558-space central parking deck. The development was constructed along North Street between Chain Bridge Road and University Drive on the former sites of a US Post Office and a parking lot, which were acquired by the City and then developed in response to a City-issued Request for Proposals. The project was completed in 2007.

Two shopping centers, Courthouse Plaza and the Main Street Marketplace, comprise approximately one-third of the retail space in the Old Town area. In 2001, the Main Street Marketplace (formerly called University Shopping Center) was extensively renovated and expanded into a center with much greater visual cues to tie it in with the neighboring historic district, both in terms of architecture and its orientation towards the street. Main Street Marketplace is currently anchored by a Walgreen's Pharmacy, Ace Hardware, and a TJ Maxx retailer, while Courthouse Plaza is anchored by a Safeway supermarket. Both centers feature numerous smaller tenants as well.

The remaining retail space in Old Town consists of restaurants, a service station, art and gift shops, clothing stores, and a few personal service businesses.

In 1995, the City completed the purchase of what was then known as the Logan and Sipan lots, at that time developed with a post office and surface parking lot, totaling almost two and a half acres. A 1995 study of potential development scenarios on these properties detailed the opportunity for critical retail and residential development as well as public parking to build a mass of activity and act as a catalyst for additional retail and residential development within Old Town. The assemblage, developed as the Old Town Village, provides an opportunity for the City to catalyze additional residential and retail development in an effort to enhance the viability of Old Town Fairfax. A new 26-unit residential townhouse development, complementing the retail and office components, is currently under construction on Whitehead Street as part of the mixed-use Old Town Village project.

Residential uses in Old Town include single-family detached residences, townhouse developments, and multifamily units. Farrcroft, located in the Transition Overlay District on the former Farr Property, includes the largest concentration of single-family properties in Old Town, with 178 detached and 92 attached units. A small number of other single-family detached homes exist in Old Town, which consist primarily of historic properties along Chain Bridge Road. Additional single-family detached homes in the School Street area, a recent expansion of the Transition Overlay District, are approved and in the planning stages.

In addition to the attached units in Farrcroft, the Transition Overlay District has townhouse developments under construction at the aforementioned Madison Mews project in Old Town Village and east of Judicial Drive at the Main Street Residences (40 units in Phase I). Townhouse projects that have been approved for the Transition Overlay District, but are still in the planning stages, would add another 62 units to the inventory (48 units in Phase II of the property currently under development as Main Street Residences and 14 units in Canfield Village off of Chain Bridge Road).

Nearly 300 multifamily units exist in Old Town in the form of three larger-scale condominium projects in the Transition Overlay District. The Mosby, completed in the mid-1960s at 10570 Main Street, contains 110 units. The Crossings, a 90-unit condominium complex on Sager Avenue, was completed in 1996 and the 96-unit Providence Square, a more upscale condominium building located across the street and fronting on Main, was completed in 2003.



The planned extension of the Transition Overlay District, explained in greater detail in the Land Use Plan section of the chapter, would increase the number of attached single-family units in Old Town by more than 400, by adding the existing development in Olde Fairfax Mews, Courthouse Square, Chancery Square, Crestmont, Breckinridge, and Railroad Court.

The City of Fairfax also owns numerous parcels in Old Town, consisting both of permanent structures and unimproved lots that may be developed in the future. In addition to Old Town Hall and the Ratcliffe-Allison House, the City owns three parcels of vacant land in the Historic District, all currently being used as surface parking lots. These include the 0.35-acre former Weight Watchers building site immediately north of Old Town Hall, a 0.4-acre former service station site at 10367 Main Street, and a 0.5-acre triangular-shaped parcel, located at the junction of North Street, Main Street, and Truro Lane. Furthermore, the City's Economic Development Authority (EDA) owns five lots, totaling approximately 0.6-acres, along Old Lee Highway and North Street; two of those lots currently contain buildings. The City also owns a 0.36-acre site located immediately north of Ratcliffe-Allison House, which was once the location of formal gardens, has been restored as the Kitty Pozer Garden and is an amenity easily accessible to Old Town Hall. Preliminary plans for the redevelopment of the block bounded by University Drive, North and Main Streets, and Old Lee Highway (including the City-owned and EDA-owned properties) into redesigned public open space and parking have been prepared for consideration by the City and the public.

Institutional uses in the Old Town area include City Hall, Truro Church, Old Town Hall, the Ratcliffe-Allison House, the City of Fairfax Regional Library, Fire Station #3, the Fairfax Museum and Visitor's Center, and public parking lots.

## Surrounding Land Use

The Northern Virginia region has experienced extraordinary change in recent years and will continue to grow and change into the foreseeable future. Current and future development in Fairfax County includes the establishment of the western portion of the County as an employment and population center through the development of the Fairfax Center Area, the Route 28 Corridor and Dulles Airport Area. In addition, redevelopment to the east of the City near the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail Station and in the Merrifield area is quickly changing the character of those areas. These and other changes in the County's land use affect the City's economy, transportation network and land use patterns. To

provide a better understanding of the nature of these changes, the planned land uses of the areas surrounding the City are presented below.

Land uses immediately north of the City are mixed use, primarily residential. The existing and planned residential densities fall into three basic ranges; either 8-12, 12-16 or 16- 20 dwelling units per acre. There are also areas of commercial (FAR 0.5) or industrial development north of the City, along Route 123 and Draper Drive respectively. The commercial development is on the north side of I-66 and the industrial development is proximate to similar types of uses in the City.

Development of the area adjacent to the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail Station, which is located less than one mile northeast of Fairfax Circle, also has an impact on the City. Most of the land immediately surrounding the Vienna Station is currently developed as residential, featuring townhouses, apartments and a small area of single-family houses. Densities range from a low of 2-3 dwelling units per acre to a high of 20- 30 dwelling units per acre. However, the character of this area is changing as large projects such as MetroWest move forward. MetroWest, currently under construction, is planned to feature over 2,200 residences (townhouses, plus mid- and high-rise units), plus nearly 500,000 square feet of office and retail uses, all on 56 acres of formerly residential land.

Existing and planned land uses immediately east of the City are predominately residential, the majority of which are designated at a density of 1-2 dwelling units per acre, with small areas of 2-3 dwelling units per acre. Some areas of higher residential density (16-20 dwelling units per acre) exist adjacent to commercial and industrial areas located in the City along Pickett Road. Also, a portion of the eastern City boundary, adjacent to Thaiss Park, borders on public parkland in the County.

Two major public educational institutions, George Mason University and Fairfax County's Woodson High School, are located immediately south of the City. With the exception of those institutions, the land immediately south of the City is designated low-density residential, generally at a density of 1- 2 or 4-5 dwelling units per acre. This density is comparable with adjacent residential development in the City.

The City's entire western boundary aligns with an area designated as the Fairfax Center Area in the County's Comprehensive Plan. This 5,340-acre area is planned and being developed as a "suburban mixed use center" with sufficient concentrations of residential and employment uses

to support efficiencies in transportation, public facilities and other public amenities. The Fairfax Center Area contains a mix of land uses including the new County government complex, retail developments such as the Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax Corner, and the Fair Lakes developments, office complexes, and a variety of housing types and densities. A future Metrorail station in this area, proposed as part of a westward expansion of the transit system, should be cooperatively planned to ensure adequate connections (vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) from the City are simultaneously developed. The County Plan envisions the area immediately west of Kamp Washington to be composed of well-planned office and commercial uses.

The anticipated development of areas adjacent to the City will have significant impact within the City. Because the development west of the City is expected to eventually equal or surpass that to the east in density and magnitude, significant shifts will result in regional traffic, housing and economic development patterns. As a result of that development, the City and surrounding area will become the County's population center, which will likely result in more traffic congestion and increased demand for City services. On the other hand, that development will also result in increased employment opportunities and greater buying potential in the City's market area.

## Boundary Adjustments

In 1991, 1994 and 2001, the City and County of Fairfax accomplished minor, mutually agreed-upon boundary adjustments with broad-based Council/civic support. From time to time, areas contiguous to the City request boundary adjustment into the City. Boundary adjustments can also be used to make the City's boundaries more coherent. Boundary adjustments can alleviate problems created by parcels or neighborhoods being split between the City and Fairfax County. When any boundary adjustment is proposed, the financial impacts upon the City must be carefully considered. Additionally, since the City cannot undertake unilateral annexation, the county must approve all boundary adjustments and often will request land in return for land given to the City.

There are several possible areas that could be designated for inclusion in future boundary adjustments. Among the areas to be added into the City perhaps foremost would be the rear of the Pickett Shopping Center. This adjustment would have the effect of consolidating the shopping center's jurisdiction, thereby making land use decisions and police enforcement simpler and more easily accomplished for the shopping center. In exchange for this area, the City might give the

County three parcels on Trapp Road and Maple Avenue south of Main Street where only portions of the parcels are within City limits. In the case of all three parcels, the residences on the parcels are at the northern end of residential areas that are otherwise within the County's borders.

Another area that would be a potential candidate for boundary adjustment is the Fairfax Gateway townhouse project on the corner of School Street and Virginia 123. This development, built in 2006, has 10 units in the City and 37 in Fairfax County. The purpose of such an adjustment would be to put the entire development in the same locality.

For these and other possible exchanges of land resulting in boundary adjustments, the City must determine the consequences of such actions, financial and otherwise. Likewise, since cities are not allowed to unilaterally annex land, the County government must also approve proposed adjustments.





# Land Use—Goal, Objectives & Strategies

*Goal: Promote attractive, well-conceived land uses that preserve and enhance the City's unique character.*

*Objective LU-1 Preserve and enhance the City's residential neighborhoods as desirable places to live.*

## Strategies

### **LU-1.1 Encourage the establishment of appropriate transitions between commercial uses and residential uses.**

Certain land uses, such as apartments, townhouses, single-family detached homes on small lots and limited office uses, have attributes of both more intensive and less intensive uses. The City should encourage the location of such uses between commercial uses and low density residential uses, where appropriate, to establish logical transitions which minimize land use incompatibilities. Alternatively, substantial buffering may be designed to provide an effective transition between uses of different intensity without intermediate land uses. Efficient, safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to commercial uses from adjacent residential areas should be encouraged.

### **LU-1.2 Refine zoning provisions to accommodate appropriate residential infill development.**

Because of increased land values and development costs, natural site constraints, and market preferences, the development of many of the City's residential infill lots as conventional low-density projects is not feasible. The City should support the development of those infill sites by applying updated development regulations permitting greater flexibility of building type and layout, while at the same time ensuring compatibility with adjacent residential areas. The zoning text should be examined to ascertain whether planned development regulations are sufficient to accommodate innovations in residential community design. Planned development regulations should also be examined to determine whether elimination of the commercial component requirement is advisable.

In reviewing development proposals for residential infill sites, the City should analyze each site with respect to its specific locational context. If a site is within an existing neighborhood, development should be designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the surrounding area. If the site is between neighborhoods with different characteristics, development should provide an effective transition.

*Objective LU-2 Encourage uses that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map.*

## Strategies

### **LU2.1 Require an applicant to submit a formal request for a Plan amendment concurrent with a requested rezoning when the rezoning would be inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map.**

The future land use designations contained in this Plan are based on the City's best assessment of current and projected conditions. However, unforeseen situations may develop that make amendment of the Plan necessary to ensure its integrity.

Consideration of an interim Plan amendment will entail a review of criteria articulated in the City Code, including consistency with the goals and objectives established in the Comprehensive Plan. However, it is important to recognize that strict, literal adherence to each provision in the Plan is not required in development proposals, because different sections of the Plan, as applied, may compete with, rather than complement, one another. Rather, development should be evaluated based on its consistency with the guidance provided in the Plan as a whole.

### **LU-2.2 Formulate regulations facilitating the implementation of the land use recommendations contained in the Plan.**

The City's land use regulations must be structured to establish a clear relationship between the land use categories and the development regulations. Development regulations should be specifically formulated to implement the philosophy established in this Plan.

### **LU-2.3 Develop incentives to encourage the appropriate redevelopment of nonconforming properties.**

Because nonconforming uses are protected under State law, the City should create incentives that encourage either the upgrading or redevelopment of such uses.

### **LU-2.4 Encourage relocation outside the City of Fairfax County-owned property yards.**

Fairfax County property yards on Jermantown Road, West Drive and Burke Station Road/Main Street are inappropriate land uses. No expansion of these facilities should be permitted. The City should strongly encourage the County to relocate these facilities into Fairfax County and should seek ways to facilitate appropriate new development on these sites.

*Objective LU-3 Promote the Fairfax Boulevard corridor as the City's primary commercial corridor.*

## **Strategies**

### **LU-3.1 Implement the recommendations in the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan Vision and Summary in order to improve the corridor's appearance and function.**

Resulting from a comprehensive public process, a master plan document and a summary document were drafted to guide future development decisions along the Fairfax Boulevard corridor. The Vision and Summary document, explained further in the Land Use Plan section and included in whole in Appendix D, contains recommendations regarding building height and orientation, relationship between land uses along the corridor and in adjacent neighborhoods, street design and parking, and implementation measures. As new development applications emerge, principles within the Vision and Summary should be followed to ensure the corridor develops in a manner consistent with the plan.

### **LU-3.2 Evaluate development alternatives for the Fairfax Boulevard Centers.**

In addition to the corridor-wide Vision and Summary contained in Appendix D, additional detail should be developed for each of the three mixed-use Centers (Kamp Washington, Northfax and Fairfax Circle) to evaluate development alternatives. In accordance with the preferred alternative, the City should revise the related development regulations to ensure their implementation.

### **LU-3.3 Encourage appropriate locations and quality design for retail development through zoning mechanisms.**

Unlike the Centers that are of adequate size to attract coordinated redevelopment concepts, the East Connector (between Fairfax Circle and Northfax) and the West Connector (between Northfax and Kamp Washington) are generally characterized by shallow commercial lots that can encourage conventional, road-oriented retail development. Conventional, road-oriented developments should be discouraged when practical to do so, but in cases where such new developments are built, those developments should reflect a high degree of architectural quality as well as pedestrian amenities in order to project a high quality image and to enable pedestrian and visual connections with potential future redevelopment projects in the immediate vicinity. Larger footprint retail development could be considered within the Centers, instead of along the Connectors, as a unified redevelopment is better positioned to accommodate the building mass through an overall site layout that is in harmony with the character of Fairfax. In conjunction with amendments to zoning within the Centers, the Connectors should be similarly examined to encourage the envisioned development pattern.

### **LU-3.4 Identify potential redevelopment areas and encourage the consolidation of small commercial parcels along the commercial corridor.**

The advantages of consolidated development include controlled access, uniform architectural treatment, improved signage and more efficient parking and landscaping. The City should identify potential areas for redevelopment and continue to implement zoning provisions designed to encourage consolidation of existing small commercial lots. To accomplish these goals, the City should continue to support the efforts of the Economic Development Authority in local development projects.

*Objective LU-4 Promote Old Town Fairfax as the City's historic core and downtown cultural activity center.*

### **Strategies**

#### **LU-4.1 Emphasize pedestrian access and usability in Old Town.**

The enhancement of the pedestrian environment is critical to the viability of Old Town Fairfax. This includes not only improving sidewalks, but also developing “people places” such as plazas, mini-parks and other forms of usable, public open space. In addition, buildings and public improvements such as signs and street lighting should not reflect automobile orientation, but rather should emphasize a human scale.

#### **LU-4.2 Encourage a mix of uses in projects located in Old Town Fairfax.**

A compatible mix of office, retail, residential and cultural/ entertainment uses contributes to a more stimulating environment, extending the period of activity past 5:00 p.m. While each of the above is a permitted use under current regulations, new projects on consolidated parcels should be encouraged to incorporate two or more of those uses.

#### **LU-4.3 Attract and retain cultural facilities and activities in Old Town and establish a unique niche to draw people to Old Town, particularly during evening hours.**

Historically, a city's cultural institutions and major civic events occurred in its downtown. With this in mind, the City should reinforce the identity of this area as its focal point and center of activity by holding major civic events and by encouraging the establishment of cultural facilities in Old Town.

Nightlife is essential to Old Town Fairfax. The City should support and encourage private sector efforts to establish cultural and entertainment uses to provide an effective draw, supporting existing and additional restaurants, inns and retail establishments.

#### **LU-4.4 Promote appropriate retail, restaurant and lodging facilities to enhance the economic base of Old Town Fairfax.**

A “critical mass” of these uses is essential to the economic vitality of Old Town. To achieve enhanced vitality in that area, a continuous pattern of retail shops and restaurants along Old Town streetfronts should be developed. Streetscapes with only pockets of retail activity, interrupted by expanses of non-retail uses, generally lack visual interest and discourage pedestrian activity. The location of additional inns or bed and breakfast establishments in Old Town would serve to increase pedestrian activity in the area and contribute to the “old town” concept.

#### **LU-4.5 Reinforce and enhance the distinctive identity of Old Town Fairfax.**

The coordination of Old Town activities, through merchant organizations, is essential to the prosperity of the business and social environment. Expanded, uniform business hours and cooperative promotional events are necessary for the enhancement of this area. Continued support of merchant groups will strengthen these activities as well as provide a forum for business community input on public capital improvements, facade improvements and business signage.

#### **LU-4.6 Implement plans for George Mason Square that leverage its desirable location as well as complements the cultural identity of the block.**

The Old Town block known as George Mason Square, bounded by North Street, University Drive, Main Street, and Old Lee Highway, contains several publically-owned properties that are appropriate for redevelopment. In addition, the block contains some of Old Town's most recognizable buildings, including Old Town Hall, the Ratcliffe-Allison House, and the Draper House, and a small public open space, the Kitty Pozer Garden. Future development on publicly-owned properties in this block should include enhancements and enlargements to the public open space. The sensitive integration of public parking to support existing businesses, Old Town Hall, and the enlarged public space should also be a primary consideration within the design. Importantly, the expanded public open space would provide a premier, centrally-located gathering place, a noticeably lacking feature in Old Town.

*Objective LU-5 Utilize the Economic Development Authority (EDA) to effectively participate in public/private partnerships for development initiatives*

### **Strategies**

**LU-5.1 Facilitate public investment projects, such as the redevelopment of the George Mason Square properties, to provide shared parking facilities and develop new commercial and residential uses downtown.**

Through the Economic Development Authority, the City should seize opportunities to foster appropriate redevelopment of key properties in Old Town Fairfax.

**LU-5.2 Utilize the EDA to serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in areas where infrastructure improvements and consolidation are essential to economically viable redevelopment.**

On the City's behalf, the EDA can serve in an entrepreneurial role to consolidate and market properties for future redevelopment by the private sector. Where a property is particularly difficult to develop or redevelop because of fragmented ownership or substantial infrastructure deficiencies, the EDA has the opportunity and authority to catalyze the development. Particularly when considering the consolidation of land in fragmented ownership, the EDA should carefully address how to overcome the obstacle of owners holding out for above-market prices for strategically located parcels. Northfax, located at Chain Bridge Road and Fairfax Boulevard, is an example of a potential redevelopment area in which the EDA could play a significant role in facilitating improvement.

**LU-5.3 Participate with other local jurisdictions, agencies, institutions, and the private sector in cooperative ventures to create opportunities for development and redevelopment in areas that span jurisdictional boundaries.**

The City should actively promote and support cooperation with Fairfax County, George Mason University, and private developers to fulfill local market demand, relate to surrounding land uses, and meet economic development objectives articulated in the Comprehensive Plan.

*Objective LU-6 Maintain awareness of surrounding land use activities and assess the impacts of potential boundary adjustments.*

### **Strategies**

**LU-6.1 Monitor planning and development activities in areas surrounding the City and maintain an ongoing dialogue with Fairfax County concerning land use issues.**

State law requires that the City receive notification of development actions in Fairfax County that are within one-half mile of any portion of the City. The City should continue to monitor such actions for potential impacts and provide comments, as appropriate, to County reviewing agencies, elected and appointed officials. The City should also continue and strengthen its informal dialogue with Fairfax County to ensure early discussion of land use issues affecting both jurisdictions.

**LU-6.2 Establish a formal policy for review of potential boundary adjustments.**

The City should establish a formal policy for review of potential boundary adjustments. This policy should include guidelines for analysis of the benefits and costs of a proposed boundary adjustment as well as a description of the process for initiation, coordination, review, and finalization of the proposed change. Consideration should be given to the common community interests possibly existing between a potential boundary adjustment area and the City (such as natural neighborhoods and natural and man-made boundaries), financial and real property resources, municipal service requirements, and the condition of public recreational facilities, schools and infrastructure in the subject area.



# Land Use Plan

*Well-conceived land uses maintain and enhance an ecologically sound and thriving residential community with a supporting and convenient commercial base.*

More than any other section of the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use Plan will have a visible effect on the future development of the City. The Land Use Plan, as directed by State law, “shall show the localities long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan” and may include “the designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted, housing; business; industrial; agricultural; mineral resources; conservation, active and passive recreation; public service; flood plain and drainage; and other areas.” It is within the Land Use Plan that the difficult balance must be achieved between the interest of the individual property owner and the overall public interest.

The determination of appropriate land uses was made only after the physical characteristics and locational context of tracts of land throughout the City were studied in detail. In preparation for the drafting of the Land Use Plan, many important issues have been considered. Among the more important of these issues are:

- Existing land use and zoning
- Surrounding land use and zoning
- Future land use designation in the 1997 and 2004 Plans
- Physical constraints to development
- Changes in nearby land use and zoning since the adoption of the 1997 and 2004 Plans
- Accessibility
- Various development alternatives
- Compatibility with the transportation, housing, and economic development objectives

Appropriate land use designations were then assigned to each property in the City, and the Future Land Use Map was prepared to illustrate those designations.

In making subsequent land use recommendations and decisions, the Planning Commission and City Council should give careful consideration to the land use designations contained in this Plan. The Land Use Plan, however, should not be considered an unalterable document, but should be evaluated (and changed as appropriate) based on changing circumstances within the City.

## Land Use Categories

Each parcel in the City designated as falling into one of fourteen land use categories presented below and represented on the Future Land Use Map (see foldout map). Where the Map appears to differ from the Land Use Plan text and accompanying graphics, the text shall govern.

### ***Residential***

Quality residential neighborhoods and redevelopment are critical to the long-range vitality of the City. Future development should support the City’s objectives of providing upscale housing in a variety of styles to balance the City’s current stock (see Housing chapter). Five land use categories of the Land Use Plan call for strictly residential land uses. Since the five categories of residential land use are based on varying densities, it is important to note the distinction between density and type of dwelling unit. Density issues strictly address only the number of dwelling units per acre without addressing the type of dwelling unit. A density of 3.0 dwelling units per acre could be provided by constructing six single-family detached dwelling units on a two-acre parcel of land or by constructing six townhouses on the same two-acre parcel while retaining a greater amount of open space. For the most part, the residential land use categories of a Comprehensive Plan can deal only with overall gross density.

#### ***Very Low Density Residential***

This category, a new designation in the 2004 Plan, was created as a means of preserving the City’s lowest density

Figure LU-3  
**Very Low Density Residential**



Figure LU-4  
**Low Density Residential**



single-family neighborhoods. In certain cases, the land use pattern in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan called for development in a broad range that included significantly higher densities than existed in most of the surrounding “built-out” neighborhoods. Similarly, current zoning for these areas permits by-right development at densities higher than currently exist in the completed neighborhoods. This category calls for residential development at up to 2.0 dwelling units per acre, corresponding to the approximate densities of the existing neighborhoods designated in this category (see Figure LU-3).

### ***Low Density Residential***

This category supports from 2.01 to 4.0 residential dwelling units per acre and generally refers to subdivision development of single-family detached homes. An example of low-density residential planned development is provided in Figure LU-4.

### ***Low-Medium Density Residential***

This category supports from 4.01 to 7.99 dwelling units per acre, and will generally result in small lot single-family detached residential planned developments. This designation is intended to accommodate small infill development sites

where single-family detached housing is the preferred alternative. An example of low-medium density residential development is Chancery Park on School Street, west of Chain Bridge Road, constructed in 2001-02 (see Figure LU-5).

### ***Medium Density Residential***

This category supports from 8 to 12 residential dwelling units per acre, and may result in a combination of small-lot single-family residential, semi-detached residential (duplex), quadruplex and townhouse development. In this Plan, the Medium-Density Residential designation is applied to many residential infill and transition sites to permit development of unusually situated sites at a reasonable density. An example of medium density residential development is the Chancery Square town homes on Chain Bridge Road (see Figure LU-6).

### ***High Density Residential***

Generally supporting a residential density greater than 12 units per acre, this category is typically applied to apartment or condominium developments. Providence Park apartments, located between Chain Bridge Road and Providence Park, is an example of high density development (see Figure LU-7).

Figure LU-5  
**Low-Medium Density Residential**





## ***Business Uses***

Quality business centers are critical to the long-range vitality of the City. Future development should be encouraged that will support the City's goals for business centers by providing redevelopment of older, outdated properties (see The Economy section). Three categories of land use are proposed to be strictly devoted to business use.

### ***Office Transition***

This category calls for office development in locations that serve as a buffer between relatively intensive commercial development and residential areas. Office uses can serve as appropriate buffers in such locations because they typically provide fewer negative externalities (such as noise, traffic, etc.) to nearby residences than do other commercial uses. While many office developments occur on land designated in the Commercial land use category, designation as Office Transition suggests that general commercial uses are not appropriate except as accessory to the primary office uses.

### ***Commercial***

Retail, office and hotel uses are appropriate in this category. The broad nature of this category allows for a mixture of nonresidential uses in addition to the typical single-use

shopping center or office park developments commonly found along a commercial strip.

### ***Light Industrial***

Given the City's relatively small size and the predominance of residential neighborhoods, only light industrial is recognized as an industrial land use category in this Plan. The few heavy industrial uses that currently exist are considered to be no longer appropriate in the City due to their incompatibility with nearby neighborhoods and other land uses. Limited industrial uses include a variety of non-polluting uses such as warehousing, automobile repair, assembly operations, research and development establishments and related office uses. Given the limited amount of commercial space available and the mixed nature of the City's light industrial districts, the City should consider permitting some commercial uses in industrial districts.

### ***Open Space***

Because the City is mostly built out, most of the remaining open areas are officially designated as open space, either through ownership by the City or through the use of covenants, easements or similar restrictions. The few

Figure LU-6  
**Medium Density Residential**





remaining lands that to date have been neither restricted by the City nor utilized for development are often seen as open space, but are, in fact, developable until the City either purchases the properties or influences the owner to formally limit development. All of the officially designated open space properties in the City fall into one of three categories, based upon the amount of alteration of natural setting and further based on the recreational uses planned for the site. These categories for open space designation are Recreation, Conservation and Preservation.

### ***Open Space—Recreation***

Most of the City's formally designated public parks are held for active recreation purposes. These typically include playing fields, playing courts and/or specialized facilities needed to support some form of active recreation. In addition, the Army Navy Country Club is an example of a privately owned recreation facility included within this category. This land use category is intended to support the continued recreational use of these lands.

### ***Open Space—Conservation***

The City of Fairfax owns several properties for their value as essentially undeveloped open space, buffers and/or visual features. Some of these lands contain passive recreation uses such as trails, picnic benches or sitting areas. Others

may be completely undeveloped. Other properties in private ownership contain lands that are particularly sensitive to development, suggesting that development should occur primarily on less sensitive areas of the site. Floodplain lands and lands that are within the Resource Protection Area of the Chesapeake Bay watershed are foremost among these sensitive lands. The Open Space—Conservation designation is intended to foster the wise use of natural resources, as opposed to precluding their use altogether.

### ***Open Space—Preservation***

Over the past half-century, natural areas have become rarer in the City of Fairfax and in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Daniels Run Park is the City's only large tract of land that remains relatively natural. As the City identifies its other important (though smaller) natural areas, these will also be considered for designation in this category of Open Space-Preservation. This category is intended to provide wilderness areas where humans are only observers in the natural system.

### ***Other Categories***

Three categories of land use are not strictly residential, business or open space. These are Mixed Use, Transitional, and Institutional.

Figure LU-7  
**High Density Residential**



### ***Mixed Use***

Certain locations in the City call for a flexible land use category that will support development with a mixture of appropriate uses. The Mixed Use category supports a combination of commercial, residential and institutional development to be tailored to specific site conditions and transition needs. The “centers” along Fairfax Boulevard (Kamp Washington, Northfax, and Fairfax Circle) are designated as mixed use, which is reflective of the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan effort and other previous plans and studies. In addition, much of Old Town Fairfax and its immediate surroundings are designated for mixed use development. The commercial uses generally include retail, office, and hotel, but could include others if those uses are logical components of the overall development. Residential uses are generally acceptable, but the intensity of residential uses should be moderated in areas where lower intensity development provides an appropriate transition, such as in portions of Old Town Fairfax for example. In addition, residential uses should not be the dominate ground-floor use within any of the mixed use districts. Any institutional uses integrated into a mixed use development should only include those with a high level of daily activity and general public appeal. Open space that provides uninterrupted pedestrian connections within the mixed use area and to adjacent areas, and can accommodate public gathering should be integrated within the project(s). Uses, or features of uses, that directly further a City goal or objective, such as those identified in this or other chapters of this Plan, should be encouraged and provided reasonable flexibility to achieve that goal or objective.

Mixed use projects (or developments) are planned and cohesive. These characteristics are central to the concept of mixed use, as a project itself may include one building or multiple buildings. Because a mixed use environment can be delivered in these various forms, uses that are mutually supportive and physically integrated must be present. The type of uses and physical environment proposed within a mixed use project distinguishes it from a development with multiple uses that are neither related, nor benefit from being located near one another. Multiple use projects could be appropriate for certain areas within the City, but shouldn't be encouraged in areas specifically designated for Mixed Use.

The types of uses and phasing of the project should acknowledge market conditions, but the mix of uses must nevertheless be mutually supportive and not haphazard. For smaller sites, or those in which a planned mix of uses among multiple buildings isn't otherwise feasible, a vertical mix of uses within a single structure is preferred. For larger development sites, mixed use structures are still preferred, but single-use structures may be appropriate as long as the

overall project adheres to the characteristics described in this section. In addition, the first phase of the development creates its image; therefore, the first phase of any phased development should include the preferred primary uses (described at the end of this chapter for each area designated as Mixed Use) or provisions should be put in place to ensure delivery of those uses within a specified schedule.

For the areas of the City where a mixed-use designation is proposed, the specific site considerations are discussed in further detail at the end of the chapter.

### ***Transitional***

This category is established to recognize specific areas, generally along arterial corridors, that provide a transition between office and commercial uses and less densely developed residential areas. These parcels may be suited to either commercial or residential development depending on the site-specific development potential and impacts on surrounding land uses. Where commercial use is chosen, the plan calls for low profile, small-scale office development with a floor area ratio (FAR) of up to 0.35. The small office buildings and generous landscaping and screening that are characteristic of this category are intended to result in suitable transitions between existing residential uses and more intensive uses or arterial streets. Where residential use is chosen, the plan calls for small infill single-family residential developments at densities approaching the midpoint of the medium density residential category.

### ***Institutional***

This category includes the public and quasi-public uses in the City, such as City-owned buildings, school grounds and churches. The lands supporting most of the existing facilities of this type in the City are shown on the plan. Some such facilities exist in locations where the plan calls for a different future use.

## **Future Land Use**

The following principles of land use, designed to achieve an optimum balance in the future land use mix, are reflected in the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Preserve and develop a unique sense of place
- Promote economic development
- Preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods and commercial centers
- Preserve and enhance the quality of the City's physical environment

- Accommodate and coordinate transportation links and improvements, including an emphasis on pedestrian access and usability
- Encourage concentrated and unified development of future projects
- Provide guidance for quality infill projects
- Encourage redevelopment of nonconforming properties
- Establish transition zones between commercial and low density residential uses

The capacity and functionality of the City's infrastructure are of critical importance to future land use. This infrastructure includes the vehicular and pedestrian transportation network as well as elements such as lighting, parks, public signage and storm water management facilities. Both the Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan recognize that economic development opportunities, market preferences, development costs, and physical and environmental constraints contribute to the patterns of change that will occur in the City.

This Plan is intended to serve as a guide to future development and redevelopment of both large tracts of land and small infill sites. It identifies business corridors and focal areas, gateways and transition areas while emphasizing pedestrian access and usability and while seeking to reinforce the distinctive identity of Old Town Fairfax. The Plan respects neighborhoods, both old and new, and business centers as critically important land uses. It highlights Fairfax Boulevard as the City's primary business corridor and identifies opportunities for future development and redevelopment of both commercial and residential areas. Finally, it recognizes the need for the City to carefully consider the relationship between transportation plans and policies, land use plans and policies, fiscal incentives, infrastructure improvements and efficient, viable, attractive land uses.

The desired future land use of the City is illustrated on the Future Land Use Map (see foldout Map). A broad description of the general features of that map is presented below:

- Low Density and Low-Medium Density Residential will continue to be the predominant land use categories, primarily recognizing existing residential neighborhoods and development patterns that reflect recent and anticipated market trends.
- The Fairfax Boulevard Corridor, including the Kamp Washington area, Northfax, and

Fairfax Circle, will retain the bulk of the City's commercially designated property, consistent with previous comprehensive plans, existing development, and recommendations of the Transportation Plan.

- The majority of the Historic Downtown area has been designated Mixed Use to reflect the desired mix of land uses in that area.
- Much of the floodplain land has been designated Open Space—Conservation throughout the City in recognition of the need to limit development in these areas for environmental protection purposes. Other properties held by the City for purposes of protecting the environment of residential neighborhoods and business centers have also been designated in this category.

In addition to the general designations contained on the Future Land Use Map, the text below contains more specific recommendations for select areas within the City.

## ***1. Old Town Fairfax: Historic Downtown & Transition District***

Old Town Fairfax is a very special combined neighborhood, business center and preservation area. In response to this special nature, the Land Use Plan designates most of the properties located in the historic downtown as Mixed Use to reflect not only the existing land use but also the preferred diversity in land uses. Properties comprising the Transition District are designated the various land uses indicated on the Future Land Use Map and elsewhere in this text. The designation of these areas in the Historic District and the Transition Overlay District allows the City to review each project with respect to its compatibility with the Historic Downtown and its contribution to the overall "old town" concept. Old Town Fairfax should contain a variety of land uses, including retail shops, restaurants, offices, residential uses, shared or public parking facilities, and open spaces.

In order to maintain an area where patrons are encouraged to visit multiple businesses during a single trip, a diversity of retail and restaurant offerings should be strongly promoted. A mix of uses that leans heavily towards one particular type will not attract the breadth of visitors throughout the day and into the evening that give Old Town its vitality. The preferred mix of uses would include restaurants, retail, and personal services on the ground floor of buildings that are intermixed along street frontages with residential or office uses above.

A sustained and focused effort is necessary to attract and promote commercial uses with a high level of appeal in Old Town Fairfax. The City should continue to work with business groups in Old Town to promote downtown and its businesses.

Cultural facilities and overnight accommodations should be encouraged to attract visitors to the area and to enhance Old Town Fairfax as the historic and cultural center of the Northern Virginia region. Economic vitality, cultural facilities, historic preservation, and aesthetic issues should be the focus of special attention. Residential development and the cultivation of University-related activities should serve to strengthen and enhance the predominant historic/commercial component. Cultural activities should be stimulated by the use of existing facilities such as Old Town Hall, the Fairfax Museum and Visitors Center, and the Veterans' amphitheater, and through the promotion of additional art galleries, indoor and outdoor spaces for art and theater and plazas for art and craft performances and demonstrations. Additional inns, as well as bed and breakfast establishments, should be encouraged in Old Town to provide unique accommodations and recreational amenities.

New and renovated commercial facilities provided within and immediately surrounding the Historic Downtown should incorporate ground-level retail and personal/professional service shops, cultural facilities and other uses that promote pedestrian activity. The structures containing these activities should be located immediately adjacent to sidewalks so that business activities and pedestrian activities encourage one another throughout Old Town.

Parking structures should be provided within easy walking distance of all shops in the Historic Downtown to accommodate the necessary level of retail activity and to facilitate a pedestrian atmosphere. To mitigate the appearance and bulk of these structures, they should be located mid-block with shops fronting along the streets, and underground parking levels should be provided where soil conditions and construction costs permit. Such facilities may be provided through private enterprise, public investment or joint public/private ventures.

The Old Town Village and the new library sites have been developed to incorporate sufficient parking for those uses as well as public parking to supplement the available spaces downtown. Such a model of development, with both pedestrian and vehicular accessibility, is appropriate for the historic district and serves as a model for future commercial and residential redevelopment efforts in the Old Town area.

Pedestrian plazas, mini parks, and other open green space should be provided throughout the entire Old Town area at highly visible locations and at natural nodes of pedestrian activity. Additional green areas or pedestrian amenities should be provided either on-site or off-site along with the development of any major new project.

In order to stimulate improved pedestrian circulation, the pattern of brick sidewalk pavement recommended by the Community Appearance Plan should be extended throughout the entire Old Town Fairfax area to establish its physical identity and guide the pedestrian flow. Pedestrian signalization should be added where needed, and brick or stamped asphalt crosswalks installed at all intersections. As part of the area's ongoing revitalization, ways of continuing to enhance the traffic pattern and improve traffic management should be identified and implemented.

In order to protect the historic significance and distinctive character of the Historic Downtown, individual development proposals for the Transition Area should be carefully reviewed to assure compatibility with this Plan and the "old town" concept. The Board of Architectural Review should continue to review projects in the Transition Area to assure harmony with the unique character of the Historic Downtown with respect to building size, scale, placement, design, signage and use of materials. However, additional guidance may be necessary to assure that redevelopment efforts render appropriate designs. A Special Area Plan should be proposed for Old Town to:

- Identify land uses and mixture of uses appropriate to street level, upper floors, and rear alleys, as well as specific types of retail, restaurant or service establishments that might best enable the City to accomplish its goals for the Old Town area;
- Identify appropriate locations for shared parking lots and parking structures;
- Locate and design pedestrian plazas, including pedestrian amenities and public art;
- Locate trail linkages and bicycle terminals; and
- Update the design guidelines for Old Town Fairfax.

To stimulate renovation activity and enhance economic vitality, the City should participate with organized business groups representing property owners and merchants by providing technical support or funding where appropriate.



The Special Area Plan should be used in conjunction with the Community Appearance Plan and Old Town Design Guidelines to serve as guides for public and private improvements throughout Old Town Fairfax. Decorative lighting, mini parks, appropriate landscaping and plazas and improved pedestrian walkways should be located throughout the area. The City should adopt standards for design and maintenance of City-owned properties to serve as a model and to promote excellence in these efforts.

The existing “small town” scale and character should be reflected in new development or redevelopment occurring throughout Old Town Fairfax so that the existing character of the Historic Downtown is not eroded or transformed. Standards for the Transition Area should ensure compatibility with the Historic Downtown by requiring that new development complement the existing architecture in terms of scale, setback, use of materials and detailing. The City should continue to seek assistance for preservation-related activities, when appropriate, through the Certified Local Government and other related programs and should update its survey of historic sites within and nearby Old Town Fairfax.

Residential development in the Transition Area is essential to the success of Old Town Fairfax and should be guided by the site-specific descriptions in the Land Use Plan. Upper-floor residences should be encouraged in the Historic Downtown, and additional residential units sited nearby to encourage evening and weekend activities to assure a viable setting for commercial uses. Neotraditional residential development, which is based on the general concept of small town communities, is appropriate for new neighborhoods near Old Town Fairfax. Principal planning factors that contribute to a neotraditional community include mixed land use, low-medium density housing, traditional street patterns, enhanced pedestrian circulation, formal civic open spaces, and a traditional architectural character.

## ***2. Extension of the Transition Overlay District***

The Old Town Fairfax Transition Overlay District supplements the Historic District through additional use, height, coverage, and design requirements beyond the base zoning for properties nearby the City’s historic downtown. Properties located in the potential extension area (see Map LU-3) may be added to the Transition Overlay District either upon application from the property owner (typically in conjunction with an individual property rezoning) or as part of a larger City-initiated rezoning. Extension of the Transition Overlay District should be accomplished to

facilitate redevelopment of this area and to increase design control along the entrances to Old Town Fairfax. Specific locations within the potential extension area are described below:

### ***a. Farr Property***

After the development of the Farrcroft community, ten acres remain on the Farr property, surrounding the Farr Homeplace at 10230 Main Street, the largest residence on the original undeveloped property. The adjacent Wilson Farr House was also retained and rehabilitated as a community and event building for the Farrcroft development. Grandma’s Cottage, also seen as an invaluable resource of the pre-development Farr property, was moved to the Blenheim estate.

The Farr Homeplace and its ten-acre lot provide a critical connection to the City’s rural past and should be retained and preserved. Historic Fairfax City, Inc. and City staff should work together to pursue the options available for preserving the status of this important property.

A shovel test conducted as part of a Citywide archeological survey completed between 2006 and 2008 found evidence of Civil War-era artifacts on the Farr Homeplace property. A more complete excavation of the site should be conducted and stewardship of identified historic resources should be addressed.

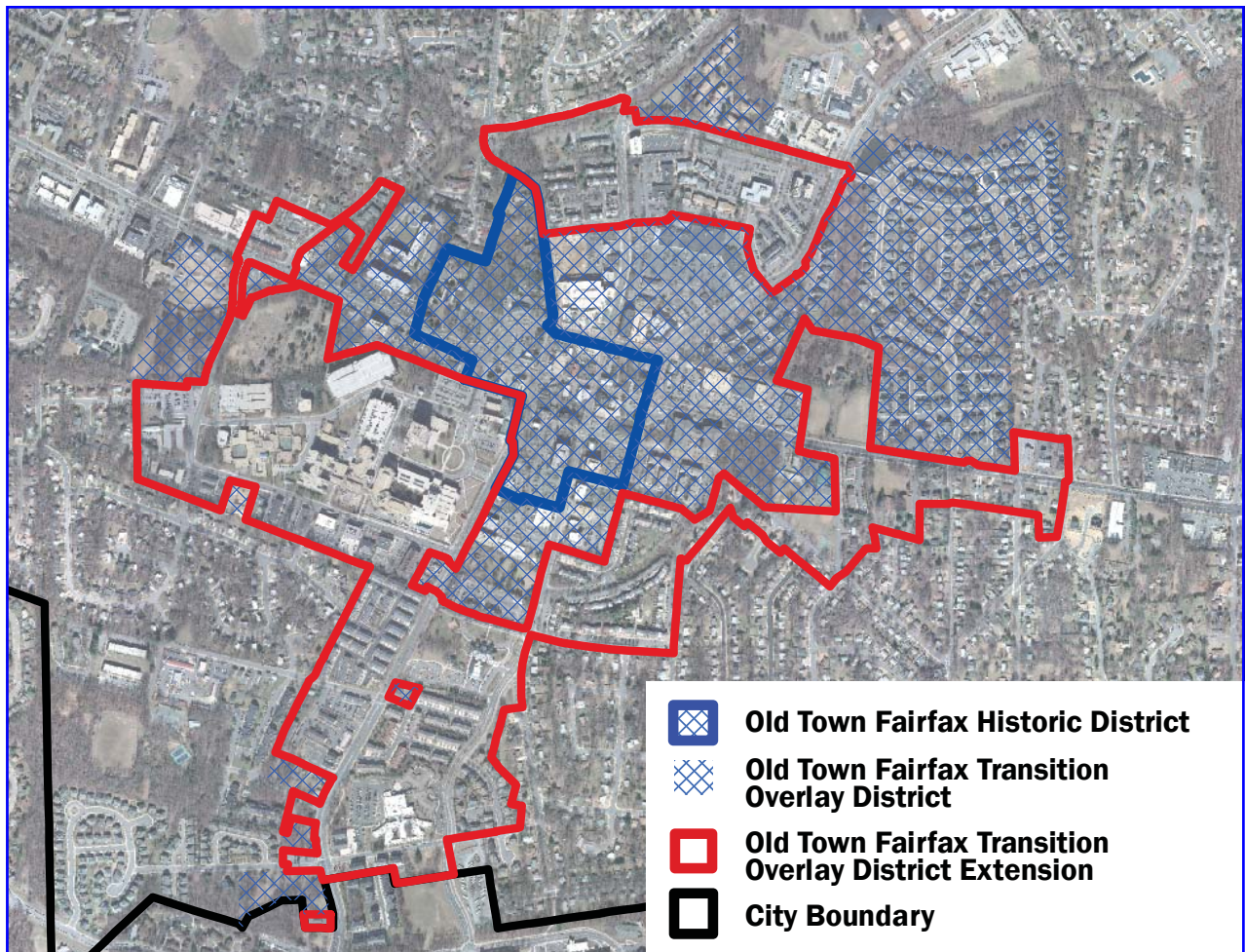
### ***b. Eastward Extensions***

Changes to the Comprehensive Plan in 1997 brought about expansions of the Transition Overlay District and redevelopment of several parcels of land east of the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. These actions have served to enhance Old Town and protect its historic character. This type of change should be continued in certain adjacent areas.

The University Shopping Center was renovated in 2000-2001, resulting in the dramatic transformation of an old shopping center into Main Street Marketplace, a more efficient use of available land that enhances and extends the traditional character of Old Town Fairfax. The redevelopment’s effect on extending Old Town’s character was enhanced by the 2003 completion of the Providence Square condominiums across Main street.

To further capitalize on the benefits created by these developments, further efforts should be undertaken. The two former filling station sites located at the intersection of Main and East Streets should be redeveloped into

Map LU-3  
**Transition Overlay District Extension**



Source: City of Fairfax CDP, 2011; Amended May 2013

uses that resonate the characteristics of both Main Street Marketplace and Old Town Fairfax. As with any development in the Old Town area, massing along the street frontages is desired, and pedestrian amenities should be included as part of any redevelopment effort.

To further protect the entrances to the Old Town Fairfax Historic District, the Transition Overlay District should be extended to include all properties fronting on Main Street eastward to Orchard Drive. Similarly, the Transition Overlay District should include all properties fronting on Locust Street between Main Street and Sager Avenue, as well as all properties fronting on Sager Avenue west of Locust Street.

For the wooded parcel between the Providence Square condominiums and the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, prospects for development are limited due to floodplain issues that affect nearly the entire parcel. A

bicycle trail traverses the property, providing access from The Crossings development through the Main Street Marketplace and into Farrcroft's trail system. This is desirable use for this parcel, due to its position between two links in the City's trail system, although a clearer delineation of the trail's route across Main Street between the property and the Main Street Marketplace is needed. The completion of this link will allow for much easier access across Main Street to dedicated off-street trails while providing a better link between George Mason University and Metrorail.

### ***c. Northward Extensions***

The extension of the Transition Overlay District to include all of Farrcroft brought its northern boundary in line with the northern end of the Transition District along Chain Bridge Road. This action left the properties along Layton Hall Drive, Whitehead Street, Plaza Drive and Democracy Lane as missing links along an otherwise



logical boundary of Old Town Fairfax. Properties along these streets are therefore recommended for future inclusion into the Transition Overlay District. Changes in grade between the office development in Courthouse Plaza, Old Lee Plaza, and Providence Hill and the sidewalk areas of University Drive, Layton Hall Drive and Old Lee Highway tend to separate this portion of the extension area from the primary streets. However, the borders of these properties are particularly important to the entrances to the Old Town Fairfax Historic District.

#### ***d. Westward Extensions***

The approach to the Old Town Fairfax Historic District from the west is particularly important because of the long vista offered by the straight delineation of Main Street and the generally uphill nature of the approach.

The properties along the south side of Main Street between Judicial Drive and Accotink Creek have been included in the Transition Overlay District and consolidated for a unified commercial redevelopment of this small triangular area of land. Further consolidation along the north side of Main Street would be beneficial to the nearby Historic Downtown.

The properties along Yorktown Drive and the southwest corner of Judicial Drive have also been included in the Transition Overlay District and are being redeveloped with upscale townhouses. Being located within the Transition Overlay District, the structures and layout on this site have been designed in a manner that will be compatible with historic Old Town, including quality brick facades and pedestrian-focused amenities.

Properties fronting on Judicial Drive between Chain Bridge Road and Main Street, which have not previously been included in the Transition Overlay District, have been designated within the extension area.

#### ***e. Southward Extensions***

The entrance to the City from the south, along Chain Bridge Road near School Street, is very close to the existing entrance to Old Town, at Armstrong Street. The street design and the streetscape improvements along this stretch of Chain Bridge Road have been carefully constructed in harmony with the character desired for Old Town. Many properties along this short stretch of road have also been designed with Old Town in mind. The southward extension of Old Town to the City limits to include all properties fronting along Chain Bridge Road, George Mason Boulevard and a portion of School Street would assure the protection of these entrances to Old Town.

### ***3. Fairfax Boulevard Corridor***

The Fairfax Boulevard Corridor (which includes both Fairfax Boulevard and Lee Highway within the City limits) is the backbone of the City's economy, serving a dual role as a principal mover of traffic through the City and as a concentrated business boulevard with important focal areas and major City gateways. A corridor-wide master plan Vision and Summary document has been created (included as Appendix D in this Plan), which provides a series of policy and regulatory recommendations that provide direction on land use and transportation.

The master plan segments the corridor into Centers (Kamp Washington, Northfax, and Fairfax Circle) and Connectors (East and West) that run between them. As the characteristics and potential for the Centers and Connectors are quite different, the Vision and Summary document provides specific recommendations for both.

Appropriate land uses along the corridor are primarily commercial, with opportunities for substantial levels of development in key areas. The mix and design of future development and redevelopment along the Fairfax Boulevard corridor should support the City's vision for its economic future and reflect the importance of this centrally located area within the region. Technology-oriented businesses to complement nearby George Mason University and high quality hotels that provide lodging for the regional and local tourism trade are highly desirable.

Although primarily a commercial corridor, land use actions are periodically considered for projects with a proposed residential component. Generally, stand-alone residential uses along the corridor are not recommended, and exclusively residential uses do not appear on the Future Land Use map anywhere along the corridor. However, there are certain cases in which residential uses may be appropriate within the overall framework of the business boulevard. Such instances include:

- Component of Unified Mixed Use Project:** The Future Land Use map identifies the three locations along the Boulevard where Mixed Use is identified as being appropriate. Those locations, or Centers (Fairfax Circle, Northfax, and Kamp Washington), are envisioned as being coordinated developments containing a mix of commercial, residential, and institutional uses. Often in such mixed use projects, a residential component is desirable in order to realize the full benefits of the commercial component. In such cases where a unified development is planned

for one of the mixed use Centers shown on the Future Land Use map, a residential component may be considered as part of the development, and would be in concert with the tenets of the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan Vision and Summary.

- **Replacement of an Undesirable Use:** Certain current land uses within the City are considered undesirable due to an unattractive appearance or other negative externalities. In cases where the elimination of an undesirable use can be considered of primary importance, consideration should be given to supporting residential as the primary land use. However, extreme care must be taken to ensure that residential uses complement the general commercial nature of the Fairfax Boulevard corridor.

Redevelopment of the entire Fairfax Boulevard Corridor should be accomplished with respect to the appropriate character of each segment of the boulevard. General recommendations for the Centers and Connectors are:

- **Centers:** Within the Fairfax Boulevard Corridor, Centers would become mixed-use environments with short, walkable blocks for pedestrian activity. Scale would be moderate with building heights predominantly 2 to 5 stories. The general redevelopment of the Centers should reflect the pattern of shorter structures adjacent to the arterial streets, with building heights allowed to “step up” towards the Center’s interiors. In locations where the transition of building height is not feasible, taller structures with arterial street frontage should be set back in a manner that mitigates building height, incorporating streetscape elements with generous landscaping.

Office, retail, lodging, and in some cases residential uses may be appropriate in these Mixed Use centers. Building and landscape design, decorative street lighting and pedestrian/street level activity within these areas should be urban in nature.

- **Connectors:** Connectors should take the form of a linear, aesthetically enhanced boulevard. Most of these areas do not have the property depth or potential for unified, coordinated redevelopment. Their focus would be on lower scale buildings (predominantly 1 to 3 stories) with emphasis on accessibility, improvements in architectural and site design, and appropriate “interface”

between the commercial boulevard and existing neighborhoods, such as appropriate land use transitions and green space buffers.

Retail, personal service, restaurant and office uses are appropriate, on a smaller scale than in the Centers. National association and company headquarters, quality hotels and restaurants, and upscale office and retail are the preferred development alternatives, with inter-parcel access ways, where possible. Recommendations of the Community Appearance Plan for lighting, street trees, and benches are important aspects of streetscape design for properties along the Connectors.

In addition to the characteristics of each of the redevelopment zones identified above, the following recommendations apply to all future development and redevelopment along the Fairfax Boulevard Corridor:

- Consolidation of parcels is encouraged to control access, improve signage, gain parking efficiencies and improve traffic circulation with inter-parcel access, and establish uniformity with respect to architecture and landscaping.
- Site planning should encourage building orientation toward primary street frontages, with parking arranged to provide adequate access for both motorists and pedestrians.
- Access to the City’s trail network and enhancement of current transportation services are encouraged.

There are four principal focus areas along Fairfax Boulevard: Kamp Washington, Northfax, Mosby Parkway and Fairfax Circle. In addition to the recommendations for Centers and Connectors described above, each of these focus areas has an established or logical identity with specific recommendations as described below.

#### **a. Kamp Washington**

The Kamp Washington area is a triangle at the western City gateway, bounded by Route 29 (Lee Highway) and Route 50 (Fairfax Boulevard), and extending westward of Jermantown Road to the City limits. The desired land use is commercial and mixed-use.

In the long term, parcels within the Kamp Washington triangle should be consolidated and redeveloped with a mix of retail, office and residential uses. The center of



this triangle is nearly unique in the City with respect to the combination of its commercial use and its distance from existing single-family neighborhoods. Of critical importance will be efficient transportation and quality architectural elements of a large-scale development. The project should present a compatible development pattern with a distinctive entry feature that identifies this site as the City's western gateway.

As in the Boulevard's other Centers, the Kamp Washington triangle is appropriate for redevelopment of between two to five stories, with the higher buildings being concentrated towards the interior of the triangle, transitioning to a lower scale along the Lee Highway and Fairfax Boulevard frontages.

Redevelopment should create a new network of streets within the Kamp Washington triangle that would provide frontage for new mixed use buildings and public spaces. This network, upon full redevelopment, should facilitate vehicular and pedestrian access throughout the triangle and should provide connectivity to the surrounding streets. Substantial redevelopment should incorporate the extension of Government Center Parkway in Fairfax County across Jermantown Road and into the triangle area, linking it to the new street network.

In the shorter term, development of properties at Kamp Washington should seek to consolidate parcels to the extent possible and produce development of quality design that will be compatible with the anticipated long-term redevelopment of the area. Inter-parcel access ways are strongly desired to ease congestion, maximize circulation opportunities, and increase vehicular safety along the arterials that surround the area.

### ***b. Northfax***

During the 1990s, the City planned a project known as Northfax Gateway at the intersection of Routes 123 and 50 as the City's entrance from I-66 along Chain Bridge Road. The City recognized that the location is the primary gateway to the City from the north and that it should be developed as a signature project that visually reflects its importance. This Center, which includes properties on both the east and west sides of Chain Bridge Road, has become one of the City's premier potential economic development sites.

Considering the importance of this expanded redevelopment area, the City should continue to build upon the master plan Vision and Summary by refining the mix of uses and the design of the supporting street

network. Important considerations in the redevelopment of Northfax should include architectural character, streetscape, pedestrian amenities, the stream/structure interface, open space, and connectivity between areas east and west of Chain Bridge Road and north and south of Fairfax Boulevard.

Redevelopment opportunities exist in the near term, particularly in conjunction with the planned road and drainage improvement project currently under design. The City should encourage the consolidation of small parcels to limit the number of curb cuts and to provide more substantial land area for a redevelopment project. The permitted intensity of redevelopment should be tied to sensitivity to the proximate single-family neighborhoods, the extent of consolidation achieved, the extent of infrastructure improvements to be provided and the quality of the proposed site and architectural design.

The complete redevelopment of the entire area could be implemented over a longer time frame, phasing in a new mix of uses and supporting street network. The area's proximity to I-66 and its prominent position at the intersection of Fairfax Boulevard and Chain Bridge Road lend it to office, hotel, and retail development, the preferred uses in the area. Structured parking, and shared parking arrangements, particularly with complementary residential uses, would allow for the most productive use of the land. Vehicular access should be designed to enhance circulation within the Center through an interconnected series of small blocks with on-street parking, but should not promote pass-through traffic in the adjacent neighborhoods. Appropriate treatment of any historic resources that may exist on the site should be considered prior to infrastructure installation and redevelopment activities. The potential for incorporation of the 29 Diner into the development of this site should be examined, as well as the potential for moving the structure elsewhere along the highway corridor.

### ***c. Mosby Parkway***

The section of Fairfax Boulevard from Eaton Place to Draper Drive is characterized by natural features; these should be retained, enhanced and incorporated into the unified streetscape. Development of this segment of Fairfax Boulevard should be environmentally sensitive and facilitate bicycle/pedestrian circulation and access. The streetscape should be designed to limit surface parking lots, particularly those visible from the right-of-way, and to respect and enhance the natural features of each site.

#### **d. Fairfax Circle**

Fairfax Circle is the major entry point into the City from north and east. As such, it should reflect unique visual identification through landscaping, special focal points, unique street lighting and signage to impart a sense of arrival.

The Fairfax Circle area exhibits a mix of land uses with industrial and commercial uses on the north side of Fairfax Boulevard and commercial and multifamily residential uses on the south side. Redevelopment of the Fairfax Circle area, north of Fairfax Boulevard, should reflect increased intensity and mixed-use characteristics, including complementary residential uses. Parcel consolidation, inter-parcel connections and coordinated access to Fairfax Boulevard should be key components of redevelopment activities in this area.

The Center at Fairfax Circle will be best implemented by incorporating and converting the industrial uses north of Fairfax Boulevard. Commercial uses are recommended along the Fairfax Boulevard street frontage, along with pedestrian amenities and a gradual stepping back of building heights from two to five stories, where possible. Medium to high intensity office development with a new east-west street north of Fairfax Boulevard to link the blocks is appropriate for the area behind the commercial frontage. Landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to the multi-family residential developments located north of Fairfax Circle in the adjoining area of the County.

The residential/commercial land use mix in Fairfax Circle, south of Fairfax Boulevard, makes attention to the transition between these two uses important, but provides a basis from which mixed use development can continue to grow. In particular, a strong emphasis should be placed on pedestrian access from the residential development to the commercial area and to any future trails along the nearby Accotink Creek. Redevelopment of the existing shopping centers should incorporate the recommendations for the Centers and Mixed Use development.

Several specific changes to land use in Fairfax Circle are necessary to promote a unified revitalization approach. The split zoning designation (industrial and commercial) on the current Home Depot site (3201 Old Lee Hwy.) should be eliminated by including the entire property in the commercial category. The citywide future land use category change from “Industrial” to “Light Industrial” calls for eventual elimination of the asphalt plant use

(on Old Pickett Road) and replacement with a lighter industrial or commercial use.

Properties located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Fairfax Boulevard and Old Lee Highway share several problems that should be addressed as part of a redevelopment. These sites, stretching from Fairfax Circle south to the site of the Lotte Plaza food market, have difficult access and parking exacerbated by multiple curb cuts. In addition, the Lotte Plaza building has its primary entrance far removed from most of its available parking, much of which is off-site. The entire area further suffers from unattractive architectural treatment, confusing signage, and a general lack of visual amenities. The City should support redevelopment of these properties in a manner consistent with the guidance provided for Centers and Mixed Use development.

### **4. Chain Bridge Gateway**

This area serves as the southern entrance point to the City via Chain Bridge Road and George Mason Boulevard. As such, although it is a small area in size, it is important in maintaining an appealing entrance to the City. This chapter divides the Chain Bridge Gateway two sections – one west and one east of Chain Bridge Road.

#### **a. School Street West**

Development of the Chancery Park neighborhood along School Street, west of Chain Bridge Road, in the early 2000s served to partially implement the recommendations of the previous Comprehensive Plan. The remaining land in this area should be consolidated and developed as a mixed-use development allowing retail, office and residential uses. Appropriate streetscape elements should emphasize a pedestrian orientation. Architecture should reflect attention to detail with articulated facades and varied rooflines to provide a “village” atmosphere. Development at this location should complement the development on School Street east of Chain Bridge Road and help to define the southern gateway into the City. As an option, a mixed use development containing townhomes, duplexes and single family detached homes at a density not to exceed 8 dwelling units per acre would be appropriate for the parcels located on the southern side of School Street east of Chancery Park, Section 3, and the 2 parcels located on the western side of Chain Bridge Road, north of the Bibleway Church. In this option, the location of all townhomes should be restricted to an area that is within 390 feet from Chain Bridge Road.

Should consolidation of parcels in this area not be achievable, the area should be developed with limited commercial uses along the frontage of Chain Bridge Road and residential uses along School Street. In such case, the residential development should be limited to 4.7 dwelling units per acre, reflecting the average density of all of the recently developed lands along School Street. Along Chain Bridge Road, commercial development should provide substantial buffers to adjoining residential property, with massing along the street frontages and visibility of parking minimized.

#### **b. School Street East**

Development along the southern portion of School Street east of Chain Bridge Road should reflect the prominent location of this property. Recently completed at the southeast corner of Chain Bridge and School Streets is Fairfax Gateway, a 47-unit townhouse development, of which the 10 units fronting School Street are in the City; the other units lie within Fairfax County.

George Mason Boulevard has been completed from near the intersection with Armstrong Street along a 70-foot-wide right-of-way past the City Hall property and the Crestmont development to intersect with School Street and then with University Drive to coincide with the George Mason University entrance. This collector street provides enhanced access to George Mason University while reducing traffic through the Green Acres neighborhood.

Although little land remains in this area for development, it is a key location near the southern gateway to the City and the northern entrance to George Mason University. The City owns the remaining portions of the former Eleven Oaks School property, the northern portion of which is within City limits. Development of the property is contingent upon relocating the school bus parking area that currently exists on the site. Future development on the property is envisioned to include Medium Density Residential uses on the west side of George Mason Boulevard and Low-Medium Density Residential uses on the east side. The City should continue to work with the County to relocate the school buses and to consider the relocation of the City-County boundary to incorporate into the City the property between the existing southern City limits and GMU between Chain Bridge Road to the east and University Park (the former University Drive right-of-way) to the west.

#### **c. West Drive Property Yard**

The County's property yard on the south side of West Drive is an inappropriate use at this location. With residential uses on three sides and a City park on the fourth, the County's property is designated medium-density residential on the Future Land Use Map to encourage its redevelopment.

### **5. Pickett Road**

#### **a. Regional Shopping Area**

Three shopping centers located near the intersection of Main Street and Pickett Road work together to function as a regional shopping area. Pickett Shopping Center and Turnpike Shopping Center, flanking the north side of the intersection, were built in the 1960's and received complete exterior renovations one time to date. Fair City Mall was built in stages during the 1970's through the 1990's with much of the center receiving renovations once during that period. Together, these shopping centers represent a major economic force with its own specific concerns. The City should recognize the importance of this area by supporting efforts to revitalize these three centers. The presence of the City-County boundary through the eastern building of the Pickett Shopping Center detracts from the City's efforts to provide the best services to this area. Future discussions regarding boundary adjustments should consider this location for discussions.

#### **b. East Side of Pickett Road**

Commercial land use designation should be extended northward along the east side of Pickett Road to the point opposite the north corner of the Fair City Mall property to encourage the transition of the industrial uses in that area to commercial. In addition, commercial uses are appropriate for most of the lands further north to the Post Office, provided that adequate parking is supplied. The City should pursue amendments to the zoning text that permit limited retail uses in industrially-zoned areas of the City, with criteria to ensure adequate parking and pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

#### **c. Tank Farm**

The tank farm on Pickett Road is a large-scale heavy industrial use that is inappropriate given the context of the small size of the City and the proximate land uses. Hazardous uses on this site, if improperly managed, represent a threat to nearby residential areas in the City and in the County while posing serious environmental concerns. Although it is recognized that the economic

investment of the current use and the cost of site clean-up for redevelopment may preclude a change of use in the foreseeable future, a lighter industrial future land use designation is assigned to the property to indicate the desired land use. No expansion of the existing uses at this site would be appropriate.

## 6. Main Street

The Main Street corridor from Pickett Road to Kamp Washington should reflect a strong community orientation, generally with a combination of local-serving businesses and transitional residential uses that serve as a buffer between commercial and lower density residential development. Transitional uses, whether residential or commercial, should be reviewed for their ability to minimize adverse impacts upon adjacent land uses rather than solely judged on density. Land uses along Main Street near Old Town Fairfax should blend with and complement the architectural styles of the Old Town Fairfax Historic District and emphasize pedestrian orientation, expanding the effective area of Old Town and its environs.

Main Street differs from the Fairfax Boulevard Corridor in that street alternates between commercial and residential areas, as opposed to the purely commercial orientation of Fairfax Boulevard. Residential areas such as the Comstock townhouses, recent subdivisions such as Maple Trace and The Boltions, and established neighborhoods such as Fairview directly abut Main Street itself. As such, redevelopment efforts should focus on maintaining compatibility between commercial and residential uses.

The Main Street Corridor can be divided into two discrete sections – that east of downtown and that west of downtown. These areas are summarized below.

### **a. East of Downtown:**

This section of Main Street is characterized by freestanding commercial sites interspersed with residential subdivisions. The residential areas along Main Street include a variety of housing types (single-family, townhouse and multifamily) and include three subdivisions that have been built in the past fifteen years.

The easternmost part of the Main Street Corridor, between the Pickett Road shopping centers and the Fairfax Square development, is unlikely to see major redevelopment in the near future. Most of this area is residential, with over 500 units included among the five subdivisions that directly border this portion of Main St. Commercial parcels along this stretch of road are limited

to the south side of the 9600 and 9700 blocks, and include two commercial condominium complexes and a small number of freestanding structures.

The portion of Main St. near the Burke Station Road intersection is the most heavily commercialized portion of the eastern section of Main St. On the north side of the street, Fairfax Square contains over 125,000 square feet of office space (as well as 502 rental housing units), and the nearby Main Street Center is a nearly 50,000 square foot strip center containing retail stores and restaurants. The south side of the street consists of freestanding commercial structures. The commercial structures at Fairfax Square have been under a continuing revitalization program for several years without noticeable change to the structures, and both the commercial and residential components remain market-competitive. The Fairfax Motors property (9909 Main St.) received a complete facelift in the early 2000s, but without major modification to structures or uses. The addition of a retail building to the restaurant property at 9959 Main Street (now Piero's Corner) maximized the single story retail use of that property.

Several older properties in the area remain in need of revitalization or redevelopment that would improve their appearance and/or functionality. The City should encourage the appropriate redevelopment of these properties in a manner that reinforces both the commercial and residential character of Main Street. The scale of development should be moderated in this area, given its proximity and interaction with neighborhoods, while design and landscaping details would help in establishing an aura of quality and accessibility in any new development in this area.

The County maintenance facility at the southeast corner of the Burke Station Road/Main Street intersection is not an appropriate use in this area. Office or medium density residential development may be appropriate if a consolidation of the County property yard site, the lot adjacent to the east on Main Street, and the two lots immediately adjacent to the south is accomplished and if adequate buffering is provided for adjacent residential communities.

The area west of Tedrich Boulevard has relatively few parcels that are likely to redevelop in the near future, and is currently developed with mostly residential uses, with low-intensity stand-alone commercial uses interspersed, along with the 4-acre Fairfax Christian Church property on the south side of the street.



Low-medium density residential redevelopment is appropriate for all other properties not already in commercial use along this segment of Main Street. Appropriate buffering should be provided between any redevelopment and existing residential properties, and the quality and appearance of redevelopment in this area should reflect this corridor's location as an entryway from the east into Old Town.

### ***b. West of Downtown:***

The section of Main Street between Kamp Washington and Old Town Fairfax is characterized primarily by commercial development. Office and retail uses line the corridor with occasional residential (Oak Knoll Apartments and The Residences at Main townhouses) or institutional (Fairfax Baptist Church and Fairfax Nursing Home) uses also sharing the frontage. Land use patterns have been fairly stable in this area in recent years, with the current construction underway for 40 townhouses at the southwest corner of the Judicial Drive intersection (The Residences at Main), the opening of the Fairfax Surgical Center at Keith Avenue in 2006, and the opening of the PNC Bank in the southeast corner of the Judicial Drive intersection in 2010 being the most significant changes. The Future Land Use map depicts and supports a continuation of the existing general land use pattern.

Although the change in topography between this section of Main Street and Old Town Fairfax can make pedestrian travel challenging, the relatively straight alignment of this section of the street combined with the elevation change provide clear views to the downtown area, and the historic courthouse in particular, and help to strengthen the relationship with Old Town Fairfax. Preservation and enhancement of the view toward Old Town should be considered in private property development and public right-of-way improvements.

The office and institutional uses in the area provide an appropriate transition to the residential neighborhoods to the north and south of Main Street. The commercial properties are generally one parcel deep and back directly to residences. Adequate buffers and screening should be maintained between the commercial and residential uses, and improved when properties redevelop.

Despite its stable land use pattern, opportunities for redevelopment within this portion of Main Street exist. Oak Knoll Apartments, a garden-style layout built in the early 1960's, is located on a 6 acre parcel in the northeast corner of Oak and Main Streets. Its dated design, internal orientation, and lack of amenities don't

position the complex well for the future. Redevelopment of the property should: be oriented toward the streets, be sympathetic to the adjacent lower-intensity residential neighborhood in terms of buffering and architecture, and have usable open space. Office use along the Main Street frontage, similar in scale to the nearby properties, could also be considered as part of a redevelopment project.

Redevelopment of properties surrounding, and to the west of, the Hallman Street intersection could also be considered, possibly in conjunction with similar activity in the Kamp Washington Center. Development in this area is important in providing a transition between the greater level of intensity at Kamp Washington and the corridor leading toward Old Town Fairfax.

Future redevelopment along Main Street between Kamp Washington and Old Town Fairfax should take its cues from more recent projects that have served to strengthen the image of the area. New development should: have the primary orientation of buildings facing Main Street with appropriate landscaping, locate parking to the side or rear of the building, and place vehicular access from the side streets in lieu of driveways directly onto Main Street, where feasible. These design features, along with ongoing attention to the Main Street streetscape, will continue to improve the quality of the environment in this section of the City.

## ***7. Jermantown Road***

The Fairfax County property yard is an inappropriate use on the segment of Jermantown Road north of Fairfax Boulevard. It is surrounded by residential development and should be redeveloped as residential use. Further expansions of the existing use on this property should not be permitted.

Safe and conveniently located sidewalks and crosswalks, as mentioned in the Transportation Plan section, are critical for pedestrian welfare to serve the high density residential, institutional, and commercial uses along the corridor.

## ***8. Neighborhoods***

Because many of the neighborhoods located in the City were developed more than 30 years ago, a substantial program should be implemented to encourage reinvestment in those areas. This program, involving the use of the Neighborhood Renaissance programs as well as a more expansive effort for the City to assist neighborhoods and individual homeowners, is described in the Housing chapter of this Plan.

This program recognizes that there is inherent value in the existing housing stock and wholesale redevelopment of older neighborhoods is not likely and could potentially result in densities and forms of development that may not be compatible with the future land use pattern recommended in this Plan. However, this Plan recognizes that there are circumstances in which redevelopment of limited areas could be accomplished in a manner that would be consistent with the overall land use pattern recommended in this Plan, would contribute to the City's Housing, Economic Development and Community Appearance goals, and would not negatively affect adjacent land uses. Any such redevelopment should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and preceded by a Land Use Plan amendment (when appropriate). In areas that abut both residential and commercial development, consideration should be given to mixed-use forms of redevelopment, where circumstances permit.

#### ***a. Northwest Neighborhoods***

Many of the neighborhoods in the northwestern part of the City, including all of Cobbdale, were developed at densities substantially lower than most of the City's other single-family neighborhoods. The Land Use Plan recognizes the special character of these neighborhoods by designating them Very Low Density Residential.

The Mavis Cobb house on Chain Bridge Road, well worthy of preservation, is one of the City's more important residences. The City should encourage the owner to seek status on the state and/or national historic register and to place covenants on the land records to prevent subdivision of the lot.

Two properties totaling approximately one and a half acres on Warwick Avenue north of Fairfax Boulevard and west of McLean Avenue are designated "transitional" on the Future Land Use Map. The properties should accommodate residential development or office development at a scale appropriate to the adjacent residential properties to the west and north.

#### ***b. Old Lee Highway Neighborhoods***

The first six lots on the east side of Cornell Road, the first seven lots on the west side, along with an adjacent lot on Old Lee Highway were developed at lower density than surrounding residences in the neighborhoods along Old Lee Highway. These fourteen lots are designated on the Land Use Plan as Very Low Density to discourage redevelopment into smaller lots.

#### ***c. Triangle Neighborhoods***

Substantial areas of the triangle neighborhoods are occupied by older homes that may be eligible for designation on either the State or National Register. This entire area should be studied for inclusion in an historic district.

The Moore Street Cemetery has long been abandoned, but is maintained by the City to ensure proper treatment and respect. The City should continue its efforts to care for this cemetery and continue to pursue legal ownership of the property.

#### ***d. Southwest Neighborhoods***

The commercial properties located on the 4100 block of Rust Road that formerly housed the Fairfax County Employees Credit Union and the bus station rely on Rust Road for access, imposing a commercial character on an otherwise residential street. The Plan recognizes the existing use of these properties, but encourages consolidation with the commercial property immediately to the east. Future redevelopment would then eliminate Rust Road access in favor of ingress and egress from Lee Highway.

Four small lots totaling almost an acre of land on Park Road (adjacent to both the Westmore neighborhood and Lee Highway commercial centers west of Kamp Washington) are designated "transitional" on the Future Land Use Map. These properties should be consolidated to permit medium density residential development or, if the properties are consolidated with the commercial development to the north, consideration should be given to using the lots to satisfy site plan requirements to buffer commercial redevelopment on Lee Highway from the Westmore subdivision.

The single-family semi-detached development approach applied to relatively large lots in the Ardmore Development in the 1940's resulted in a neighborhood of inefficient residences that have not aged as well as most others in the City. The attached status has made these homes difficult to enlarge or modernize, even though their lot sizes would suggest there is sufficient land to do so. The Land Use Plan designates this area Medium Density Residential to encourage consolidation and redevelopment of this neighborhood. Any subsequent consolidation should result in a mixed-use urban village, with offices on the north and residential densities transitioning from low-medium on the west to high on the south and medium on the eastern portions of the site.

A low-density buffer (or alternatively, a substantial open space/landscape buffer) should abut the existing single-family detached neighborhood.

#### ***e. Southeast Neighborhoods***

When the City consolidated its four elementary schools into two, the Green Acres Elementary School site became available for re-use. Although the City invited proposals for long-term lease of the property, the City ultimately recognized its own short-term need for the property and the ability to determine the long-term use at a later date. The City should undertake a formal study of its Green Acres property in preparation for the City's possible eventual vacation of its premises. The Land Use Plan designates this property for Institutional use to recognize its continuing governmental use. It is anticipated that this designation may be reevaluated following completion of the study.

Many of the residential areas around Burke Station Road, Mosby Road, Orchard Drive and Forest Avenue were developed on lots larger than usual for the City. The Land Use Plan recognizes the importance of these large lots to their neighborhood character by designating the area Very Low Density Residential.

Four lots in the extreme southeast part of the City are separated from other City residences by commercial uses. These lots are, however, closely associated with adjacent residences in Fairfax County. This area should be carefully considered during any future discussions regarding boundary adjustments.

#### ***f. East Neighborhoods***

All of the lots in the Little River Hills subdivision are larger than most lots in the City of Fairfax. These lots are designated on the Land Use Plan for Very Low Density Residential use to protect the existing low-density character of the neighborhood.

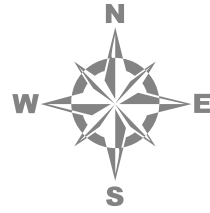
## ***9. Open Space***

For many years the City of Fairfax has held many of its lands as open space with the intent to never develop them while assuming that other privately held lands would also never develop. Two recent trends have converged to highlight the need to formalize the City's policies concerning open space. The City's residents have come to more highly value open spaces while those in the land development business have come to more highly value developable land. This situation calls for two general changes to the Land Use Plan.

The Plan shows as Open Space—Conservation several small parcels of land that were originally transferred to the City as future street rights-of-way. Other parcels that were actually built as “stub streets” were never used for access and are shown similarly on the Plan. The City should continually monitor its land holdings to assure that it formally designates as Open Space all properties that the City expects to retain an open space character.

Throughout the City, private owners have held properties or portions of their properties for open space purposes. The largest of these is the Army Navy Country Club, held for recreation use. The Plan designates this property as Open Space—Recreation to reflect its current and future planned use. The City should investigate the possibility of obtaining a conservation easement over all or a portion of this property to assure its continuing availability as open space. Most other privately held properties that the City expects to remain as open space are associated with stream valleys and are protected by floodplain and Chesapeake Bay Preservation provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

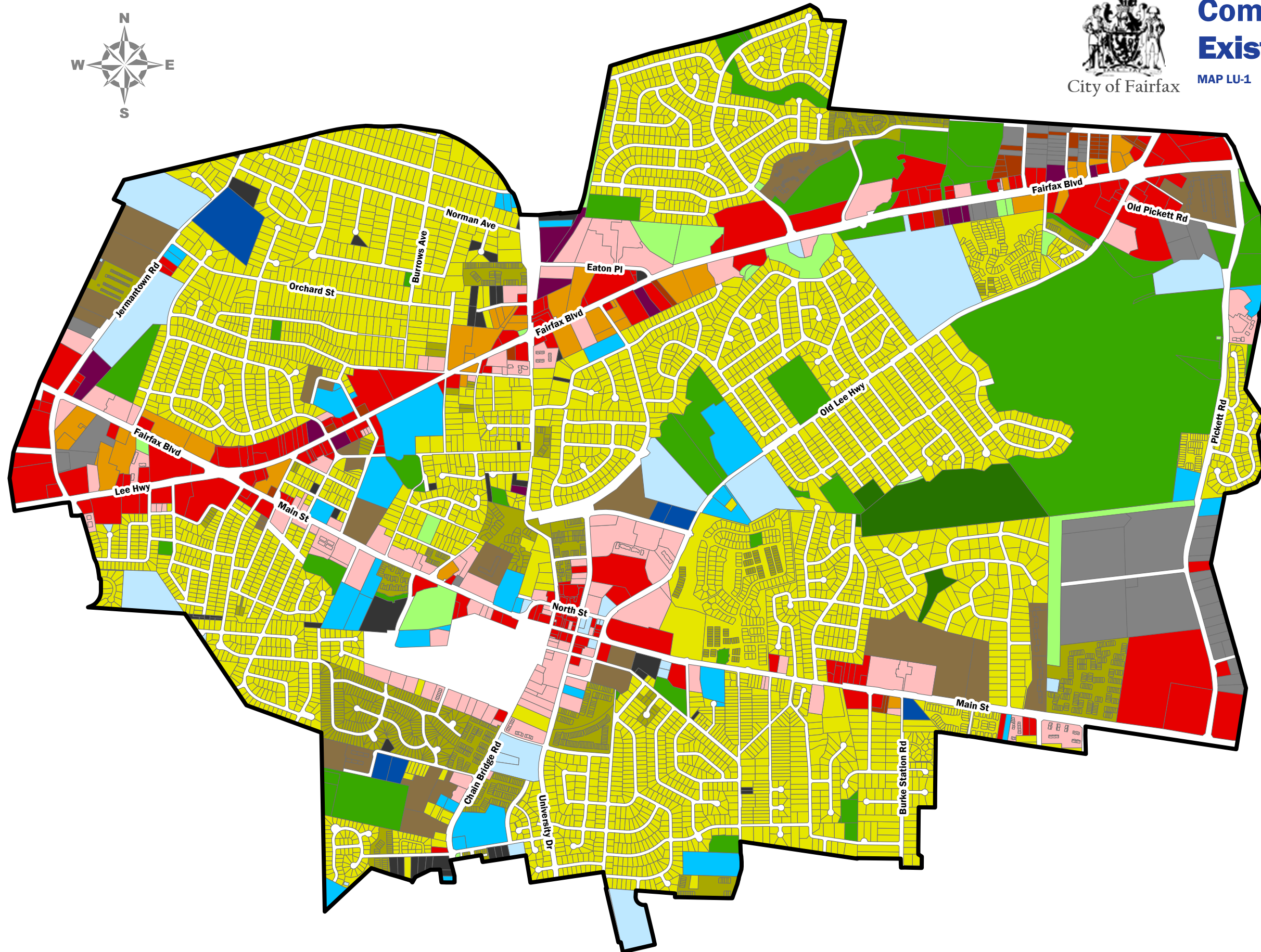




City of Fairfax

# Comprehensive Plan Existing Land Use Map

MAP LU-1



## RESIDENTIAL

- RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE DETACHED
- RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE ATTACHED
- RESIDENTIAL - MULTIFAMILY

## BUSINESS

- COMMERCIAL - RETAIL
- COMMERCIAL - OFFICE
- COMMERCIAL - LODGING

## OPEN SPACE

- OPEN SPACE - PRESERVED
- OPEN SPACE - RECREATION & HISTORIC
- OPEN SPACE - UNDESIGNATED

## INSTITUTIONAL

- INSTITUTIONAL - CITY OF FAIRFAX
- INSTITUTIONAL - GENERAL
- INSTITUTIONAL - FAIRFAX COUNTY

## OTHER

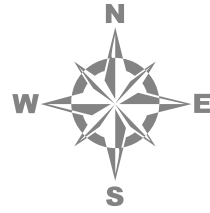
- AUTO DEALER
- AUTO REPAIR
- INDUSTRIAL
- VACANT

1 inch = 1,500 feet



Source: City of Fairfax Department of Community Development & Planning, 2012

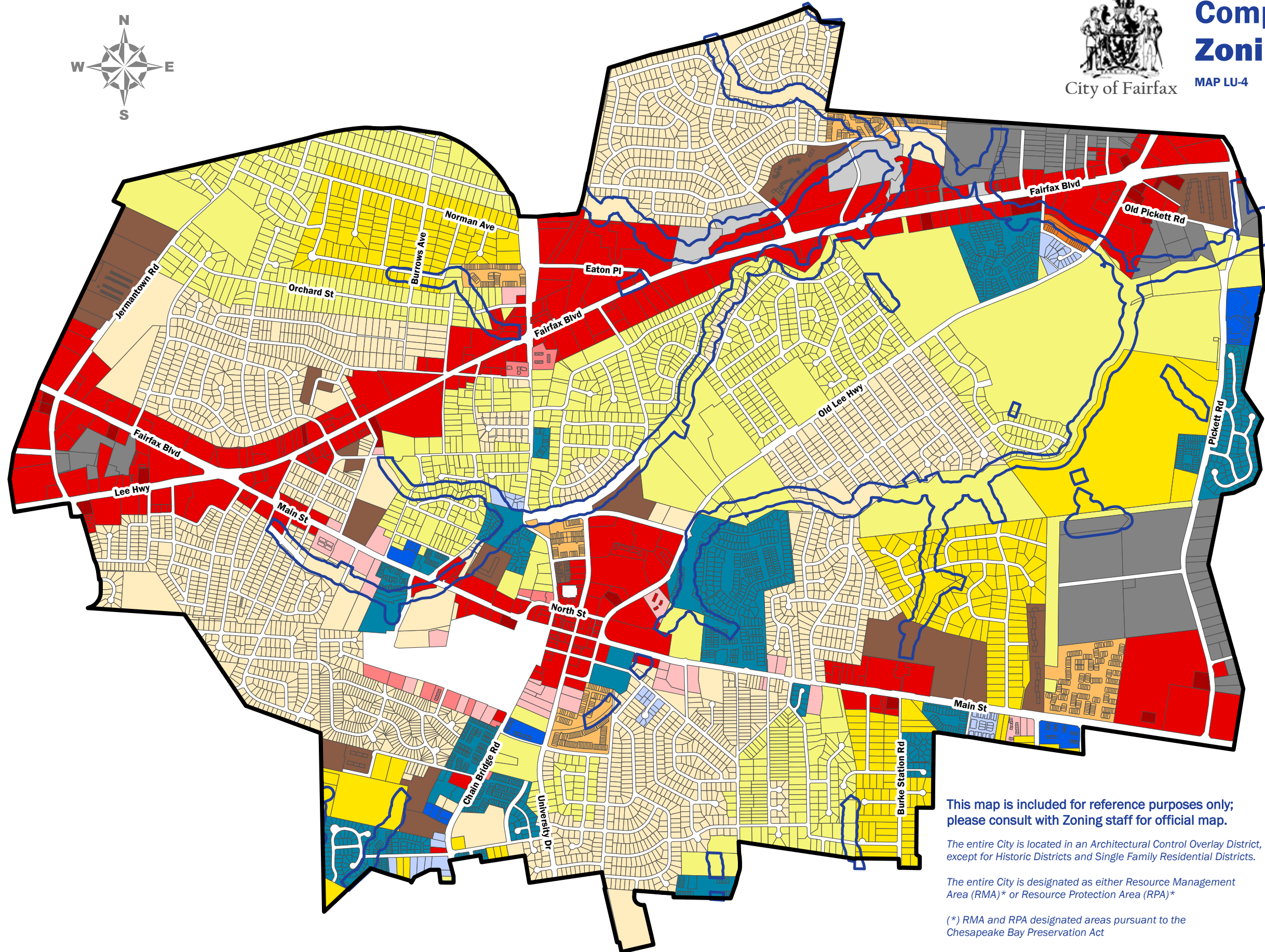




City of Fairfax

# Comprehensive Plan Zoning Map

MAP LU-4



## RESIDENTIAL

- R-1 Residential
- R-2 Residential
- R-3 Residential
- RT Townhouse
- RT-6 Townhouse
- RM Multifamily

## BUSINESS

- C-1 Office Commercial
- C-1L Limited Office
- C-2 Retail Commercial
- C-3 General Commercial

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

- RPD Residential Planned Development
- P-D Planned Development
- CPD Commercial Planned Development

## INDUSTRIAL

- I-1 Industrial
- I-2 Industrial

## OTHER

- RPA Resource Protection Area

This map is included for reference purposes only;  
please consult with Zoning staff for official map.

The entire City is located in an Architectural Control Overlay District,  
except for Historic Districts and Single Family Residential Districts.

The entire City is designated as either Resource Management  
Area (RMA)\* or Resource Protection Area (RPA)\*

(\*) RMA and RPA designated areas pursuant to the  
Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act



Source: City of Fairfax Department of Community  
Development & Planning, 2012